

Application Serial No. 10/629,208
Office Action Dated February 10, 2006
Art Unit: 3618

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IN THE CLAIMS

Amendments To The Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A four-wheeled vehicle comprising:
 - a steering mechanism having a bar handle;
 - a front part having right and left front wheels;
 - a rear part having right and left rear wheels;
 - the front and rear wheels defining a straight line at a level extending in a longitudinal direction through uppermost points of the front and rear wheels;
 - a driver's seat disposed at said front part; and
 - a rear passenger seat disposed behind said driver's seat with a backrest for the driver therebetween, said rear passenger seat facing forwardly;
a passenger seat backrest that is entirely positioned forwardly of a rotation axis of the rear wheels;
wherein the driver's seat is disposed at substantially the same level as the straight line, such that in side view, more of the driver's seat is located below the straight line than above it so long as some of the driver's seat is located above the straight line, and the rear passenger seat is disposed at a higher level than the driver's seat;
whereby said vehicle with driver and passenger maintains a low center of gravity.
2. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said driver's seat includes a front part having driver's footrests provided at opposite sides thereof, said driver's seat being formed to allow a driver to sit astride thereon with his feet rested on said footrests.
3. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 2, wherein each of said footrests has a side edge projecting upwardly.
4. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 3, wherein said right front wheel and said

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right rear wheel provide a first straight line extending therethrough, said left front wheel and said left rear wheel provide a second straight line extending therethrough, and said side edges are positioned within a region defined between said first and second straight lines when viewed in top plan.

5. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 2, further comprising rear passenger's footrests disposed behind said driver's footrests.

6. (Currently amended) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said driver's seat and said rear passenger ~~seat~~ seats are opened at opposite sides thereof.

7. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said driver's seat and said rear passenger seat are formed to allow passengers to sit astride thereon.

8. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said driver's seat is positioned at substantially the same level as said rear passenger seat.

9. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said rear passenger seat has bulged portions provided at opposite sides thereof for providing a larger width than said driver's seat.

10. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 6, further comprising a front cover and a windshield disposed in front of said bar handle, and a body cover disposed behind and below said driver's seat.

11. (Withdrawn) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 10, further comprising a roof member continuous with said windshield and disposed above said driver's seat and said rear passenger seat.

12. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising a power unit part disposed below one of said driver's seat and said rear passenger seat, said power unit part including a torque converter mechanism.

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13. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 12, wherein said power unit part further includes a transmission mechanism for transmitting an output from said torque converter mechanism to said right and left rear wheels to drive said right and left rear wheels.

14. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising first side support members disposed at opposite sides of said driver's seat.

15. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising second side support members disposed at opposite sides of said rear passenger seat.

16. (Withdrawn) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 15, further comprising a storage portion, a roll bar and roof supporting posts provided behind said rear passenger seat, and at least one of said storage portion, and said roll bar and said roof supporting posts is united with said second side support members.

17. (Previously presented) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 14, further comprising the backrest disposed behind said driver's seat and united with said first side support members.

18. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, wherein said driver's seat and said rear passenger seat have a member disposed therebetween, said driver's seat and said rear passenger seat cooperating with each other to provide a single seat, said member being positioned at an intermediate part of said single seat.

19. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising a power unit part disposed below said rear passenger seat, said front wheel and said rear wheel providing a straight line extending through the vicinities of uppermost points thereof, said power unit part being disposed below said straight line.

20. (Original) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising a power unit part disposed below said rear passenger seat, said power unit part including a forwardly directed engine.

21. (Currently Amended) A four-wheeled vehicle comprising:
a front part having right and left front wheels;
a rear part having right and left rear wheels;
the front and rear wheels defining a straight line at a level extending in a longitudinal direction through uppermost points of the front and rear wheels;
a driver's seat disposed at the front part; and
a rear passenger seat disposed behind said driver's seat with a backrest for the driver therebetween, said rear passenger seat facing forwardly and being in the form of a bucket seat with a passenger seat backrest that is entirely positioned forwardly of a rotation axis of the rear wheels,
wherein the driver's seat is disposed at substantially the same level as the straight line, such that in side view, more of the driver's seat is located below the straight line than above it so long as some of the driver's seat is located above the straight line, and the rear passenger seat is disposed at a higher level than the driver's seat;
whereby said vehicle with driver and passenger maintains a low center of gravity.

22. (Currently Amended) A four-wheeled vehicle comprising:
a front part having right and left front wheels;
a rear part having right and left rear wheels;
the front and rear wheels defining a straight line at a level extending in a longitudinal direction through uppermost points of the front and rear wheels;
a driver's seat disposed at the front part;
a rear passenger seat disposed behind said driver's seat with a backrest for the driver therebetween, said rear passenger seat facing forwardly,
a passenger seat backrest that is entirely positioned forwardly of a rotation axis of the rear wheels;

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wherein the driver's seat is disposed at substantially the same level as the straight line, such that in side view, more of the driver's seat is located below the straight line than above it so long as some of the driver's seat is located above the straight line, and the rear passenger seat is disposed at a higher level than the driver's seat;

~~wherein the driver's seat is disposed at substantially the same level as the straight line, and the rear passenger seat is disposed at a higher level than the driver's seat;~~

a front roll bar disposed in front of said driver's seat and in upright position;

a rear roll bar disposed behind said rear passenger seat and in upright position; and

said front roll bar and said rear roll bar providing a straight line extending through the vicinities of top ends thereof, said straight line having a space defined therebelow to allow a driver and a rear passenger to sit on said driver's seat and said rear passenger seat, respectively, within said space.

23. (Previously presented) A four-wheeled vehicle according to claim 22, such that said backrest is positioned at the same level as the waist of said driver sitting on said driver's seat.

24. (Currently Amended) A four-wheeled vehicle having substantially the same overall length as a motorcycle, and a width substantially half the overall length, said vehicle comprising:

a front part having right and left front wheels;

a rear part having right and left rear wheels;

the front and rear wheels defining a straight line at a level extending in a longitudinal direction through uppermost points of the front and rear wheels;

a driver's seat disposed at the front part; and

a rear passenger seat disposed behind said driver's seat with a backrest for the driver therebetween, said rear passenger seat facing forwardly,

a passenger seat backrest that is entirely positioned forwardly of a rotation axis of the rear wheels;

wherein the driver's seat is disposed at substantially the same level as the straight line such that in side view, more of the driver's seat is located below the straight line than above

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the straight line so long as some of the driver's seat is located above the straight line, and the rear passenger seat is disposed at a higher level than the driver's seat.